

**In the Claims**

Kindly replace the claims with the following amendments and new claims:

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Claim 1 (Original) A system comprising:

software accessed at a provider computer, the software adapted to prompt the provider to input data concerning a workers' compensation claim, the software adapted to send an electronic claim number request containing at least some of the data across the Internet to a workers' compensation claim verification system; and

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a workers' compensation claims verification system adapted to receive the at least some of the data and to determine therefrom any matching workers' compensation claim number, if there is a matching workers' compensation claim number, the workers' compensation claims verification system is adapted to electronically supply the matching workers' compensation claim number to the provider computer, if there is no matching workers' compensation claim number, the workers' compensation claims verification system is adapted to produce an indication of the lack of the workers' compensation claim number.

Claim 2 (Currently amended) The system of Claim 1 wherein the indication is an ~~early alert~~ message electronic signal from the Workers' Compensation claims verification system to a payer computer.

Claim 3 (Original) The system of Claim 1 wherein the indication is a signal to other software systems co-located with the workers' compensation claims verification system.

Claim 4 (Original) The system of Claim 1 wherein the workers' compensation claims verification system electronically requests a workers' compensation claim number from a payer computer.

Claim 5 (Original) The system of Claim 1 wherein the software accessed at the provider computer is part of a workers' compensation medical treatment reporting system.

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Claim 6 (Original) The system of Claim 1 wherein the software accessed at the provider computer is adapted to use the workers' compensation claim number obtained from the Workers' Compensation claim verification system to produce medical treatment reports including the Workers' Compensation claim number.

Claim 7 (Original) The system of Claim 1, further comprising multiple providers, each having a provider computer containing Workers' Compensation software, each of the provider computers being operably connected to the Workers' Compensation claim verification system across the Internet.

Claim 8 (Original) The system of Claim 1, wherein the Workers' Compensation claim verification system contains claim data for a number of payers.

Claim 9 (Original) The system of Claim 1, wherein the Workers' Compensation claim verification system is updated with data obtained from payer computers.

Claim 10 (Original) The system of Claim 1, wherein at least some of the data sent across the Internet includes name data, social security data, and injury date data.

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Claim 11 (Original) The system of Claim 1, wherein the Workers' Compensation claim verification system is adapted to interface with a payer computer to request a Workers' Compensation claim number using a database at a server, and in response to a claim verification request from a provider computer received at the server database, retrieve a claim number from the database and provide the claim number to the provider computer.

Claim 12 (Original) The system of Claim 11, wherein the Workers' Compensation claim verification system is adapted to receive claim numbers from any number of payer computers and match the payer claim numbers with claim verification requests received by the database from any number of provider computers.

Claim 13 (Original) The system of Claim 1, wherein the Workers' Compensation claim

verification system received blocks of unassigned claim numbers from payer computers and the Workers' Compensation claim verification system, and assigns claim numbers to injuries from the blocks of unassigned claim numbers in 1 response to claim verification requests received by the Workers' Compensation claim verification system from provider computers.

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Claim 14 (Original) The system of Claim 1, wherein the Workers' Compensation claim verification system includes software that is adapted to allow a provider computer to access a payer computer, and payer computer to access the provider computer, for the purpose of requesting and supplying claim numbers.

Claim 15 (Original) The system of Claim 1, wherein the Workers' Compensation claim verification system is maintained at a payer computer.

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Claims 16-54 (withdrawn).

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55. (new) A system for processing workers compensation claim information comprising:  
a computer programmed to accept information, which information may include a corresponding claim number, from a provider of medical services; said computer operative to transmit a subset of the information, including the corresponding claim number if the claim number is present in the information, to a verification means comprising: a database of rules to reconcile billing data required by a recipient of the subset of information; and an associated database, and an indicator, wherein said databases are utilized to determine if the subset of the information includes a valid

claim number, and if the subset of information does not include a valid claim number the indicator produces an electronic signal.

56 (new) A method for processing workers compensation claim information comprising the steps of: inputting information, which information may include a corresponding claim number, from a provider of medical services to a suitably programmed computer; transmitting a subset of the information, including the corresponding claim number if the claim number is present, to a verification means wherein the steps of verification include: accessing a database of rules to reconcile billing data required by a recipient of the subset of information and an associated database, and determining if the subset of the information includes a valid claim number.

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Claim 57 (New) The system of Claim 55 wherein the electronic signal produced by the indicator is transmitted to a payer computer.

Claim 58 (New) The system of Claim 55 wherein the electronic signal produced by the indicator is an electronic mail from the system for processing workers compensation claim information to a payer computer.

Claim 59 (New) The system of Claim 55 wherein the electronic signal produced by the indicator includes a valid claim number.

Claim 60 (New) The system of Claim 55 wherein the electronic signal produced by the indicator is transmitted from the system for processing workers compensation claim information to the provider of medical services submitting the information.

Claim 61 (New) The system of Claim 55 wherein the database contains rules sufficient to reconcile billing data for one or more recipients.

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Claim 62 (New) The system of Claim 55 wherein the database of rules for reconciling billing data required by a plurality of recipients, contains a subset of the rules that are applicable to a corresponding recipient, and the verification means is configured to apply the subset of rules for reconciling billing data required by the corresponding recipient.

Claim 63 (New) The method of claim 56 wherein the indicator includes a valid claim number.

Claim 64 (New) The method of claim 56 wherein the indicator is transmitted to the recipient.

Claim 65 (New) The method of claim 56 wherein the indicator is transmitted to the provider of medical services.

Claim 66 (New) The method of claim 56 wherein the database contains rules sufficient to reconcile billing data for one or more recipients.

Claim 67 (New) The method of claim 56 wherein the database of rules contains a hierarchy of rules for reconciling billing data required by a plurality of recipients, a subset of which rules are applicable to a corresponding recipient, and the verification means is configured to apply the subset of rules for reconciling billing data required by the corresponding recipient.

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Claim 68 (New) The method of claim 56 wherein if the subset of information does contain a valid claim number then indicating that the subset of information does contain a valid claim number.

Claim 69 (New) The method of claim 56 wherein if the subset of information does not include a valid claim number, then indicating that the subset of information does not contain a valid claim number.

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